



PAN ★★★★★

RELEASED: Now Showing
DIRECTOR: Joe Wright
CAST: Hugh Jackman, Garrett Hedlund, Rooney Mara
RATING: PG

J. M. Barrie's young hero takes flight in the most bizarre Peter Pan film to date.

In 1991, Steven Spielberg pretty much put the 'never again' into Neverland for a lot of viewers with the horrible *Hook*, and we didn't see J.M. Barrie's boy who could fly on the big screen again until 2003, in P.J. Hogan's not-bad *Peter Pan*. Now the timeless tale has been revisited by British director Joe Wright (*Atonement*) and while the trailer makes it look every bit as cringeworthy as Spielberg's pantomime, Wright's *Pan* is so far removed from the candy-coloured Neverland of Disney and *Hook*, it exists in an entirely different universe.

The dark cinematography of the opening act, in which Peter Pan (newcomer Levi Miller) is kidnapped from an orphanage run by monstrous nuns during the London Blitz, is sustained throughout the entire film. There's no colourful transition when we reach Neverland as per *The Wizard of Oz*, rather things get progressively more bizarre. Following an aerial dogfight involving spitfires and a flying pirate ship, Peter is deposited on a floating cloud island ruled by the flamboyant pirate Blackbeard (Hugh Jackman), who's overseeing a massive mining operation with a workforce of abducted orphans digging for fairy dust. Greeting the new arrivals with a sample from Nirvana's "Smells Like Teen Spirit", the initial effect is like *Temple of Doom* meets Baz Luhrmann. But don't leave just yet.

Blackbeard, played with obvious relish by an unrecognisable Jackman, replaces Hook as the villain – the latter is now a charming Indiana Jones-like rogue (Garret Hedlund) who helps Peter escape to the forest where he meets

Tiger Lily (Rooney Mara) and her tribe, and discovers his destiny as the 'chosen one'. Ah, so it's an origin story!

Kudos to Wright and co. for creating a version of Peter Pan quite unlike what has gone before; the Tim Burtonesque, steampunk vision of Neverland is alone worth the price of admission, and the visual effects are seamlessly integrated.

How this unconventional approach will go down with the young target audience remains to be seen, but those looking for a darker and more fantastic take on a classic will be well and truly hooked. **Scott Hocking**

FURTHER VIEWING: *Hook*, *Peter Pan*



ALSO SCREENING IN OCTOBER



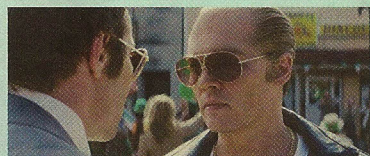
CRIMSON PEAK

Nobody does horror quite like visionary director Guillermo del Toro. When his long gestating adaptation of H.P. Lovecraft's *At the Mountains of Madness* was shelved once again, the Mexican master threw himself into this lavish period ghost story. The cast includes Tom Hiddleston, Mia Wasikowska and Jessica Chastain, but the real star is a cavernous gothic mansion "that breathes, bleeds... and remembers." Enter if you dare on **Oct 15**.



THE INTERN

She was menaced by Meryl in *The Devil Wears Prada* but this time Anne Hathaway is the boss of an online fashion site, and her intern is none other than the great Bobby De Niro. **Oct 1**.



BLACK MASS

A balding Johnny Depp plays Whitey Bulger, the most notorious gangster in US history. Benedict Cumberbatch, Joel Edgerton and Kevin Bacon co-star in this true-crime thriller. **Oct 15**



PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION

The discovery of an old video camera opens a window to the other side in this fifth chapter in the found-footage horror phenomenon. This one actually looks good, in a *Poltergeist* kind of way, with 3D accentuating the scares. **Oct 22**.